

PA
3134
.P9

STANFORD
LIBRARIES

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF GREEK TRAGEDY

By

D. L. PAGE

*Regius Professor of Greek in the
University of Cambridge*

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, 1967

PUBLISHED BY
THE SYNDICS OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

London: 200 Euston Road, N.W. 1

New York: 32 East 57th Street, 22

Agents for Canada, India, and Pakistan: Macmillan

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF GREEK TRAGEDY

By

D. L. PAGE

Regius Professor of Greek in the
University of Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF GREEK TRAGEDY

BY

D. L. PAGE

§1. *Prefatory*

I am well aware what it is that usurps this time of night: it is the ghost of a Praelection. It may be thought that I do no useful service if I beckon it to walk again disguised as an Inaugural Lecture. But it is not easy for a newcomer to speak on the themes most appropriate to this occasion; and for me it is the more difficult, since I should have to cover, uncomfortably and with unequal stride, a field traversed by my predecessor with ease and gaiety.

You would not forgive me if I said nothing, and Professor Robertson will not forgive me if I say much, on a topic which is in our minds to-day. I hope he will allow me to say, with all brevity and candour, that it is pleasant for us all, and to me in particular a relief and comfort, to know that he remains and works among us; and that we hope that he may feel that, apart from certain ultimately inevitable formalities, no very startling change has occurred

after all. I feel myself under a heavy personal obligation to him: and I need no reminder how hard it will be to follow one whose lectures have been a source of inspiration in this University for twenty-two years; whose published works have become at once standard works; and whose unpublished work on Pindar is eagerly expected as being of the highest importance to our studies.

§2. *The New Text*

Last summer Mr Lobel published part of the text of a Greek Tragedy, written on papyrus in the latter part of the second century A.D. or perhaps the earlier part of the third, and discovered at Oxyrrhynchus in Egypt.¹ Of the three columns of writing represented in the papyrus, the second contains sixteen successive lines in a relatively good state of preservation.

col. ii

Γύ[γην σαφῶ]ς ἐ(ι)σεῖδον, [ο]ύκ εἰκάσματι,
 ἔδε[ισα] μὴ φόνου τις ἔνδον ἦ(ι) λόχ[ο]ς,
 ὅτ[οῖα] τὰπίχειρα ταῖς τυραννίσιν·
 ἔπε]ι δ' ἔτ' ἐγρήσσοντα Κανδαύλην ὀρώ,
 5 τὸ δρασθὲν ἔγνω κα[ι] τίς ὁ δράσας ἀνὴρ·
 ὥς δ' ἀξυνήμων καρδί[ας] κυκωμένης
 καθεῖρξα σῖ[γ]' ἄ]πυσ[τον] αἰσχύ[η]ς βοήν·
 ἐν δεινίῳ [δὲ φρον]τίσιν στρωφωμένη(ι)
 νύξ ἦν ἀτέρ[μων] ἐξ] ἀυπνίας ἐμοί·
 10 ἔπει δ' ἀνῆλ[θε παμ]φᾶης Ἑωσφόρος,
 τῆς πρωτοφε[γοῦς] ἡ]μέρας πρ[ο]άγγελος,
 τὸν μὲν λέχους ἡγειρ[α] κάζεπεμψάμην

λαοῖς θεμιστεύσονται· μῦθος ἦν ἐμοί
 πειθοῦς ἐτοῖμο[ς οὐ]το[ς,] ὅστ[ις οὐ]κ ἔῃ<1>
 15 εὔδειν ἄνακτα πάν[νυχ',] ὧι λαῶν μέλει.
 Γύγην δέ μοι κλητῆρε[ς]...

The Queen of Lydia. <When> I saw clearly, not by guess, that it was Gyges, I was afraid of a plot for murder in the palace; for such are the wages of a monarch's state. But when I saw that Kandaules was still awake, I knew what had been done and what man had done it. Yet as if ignorant, despite the turmoil in my heart I bridled in silence my dishonour's cry, to be unheard. My night was endless for want of sleep, as in my bed to and fro I turned in anxious thought. And when the brilliant star that brings the dawn arose, forerunner of the first gleam of day, I roused Kandaules from bed and sent him forth to deliver law to his people: Persuasion's tale was ready on my lips, the one that forbids a King, the guardian of his people, to sleep the whole night through. And summoners (have gone to call) Gyges to my presence....

[All supplements are taken from text or commentary of the first edition, except ν. 1, σαφῶς εἰσεῖδον; ν. 7, ἀπυστον (a particularly doubtful stopgap: but we must, I think, beware of σι[γῆι] πᾶσ[αν], for [αν] does not nearly fill the gap); ν. 14, where οὐ]κ ἔῃ seems to me very likely (the remainder of the supplements here and in ν. 15 are merely *exempli gratia*).]

Mr Lobel introduced his discovery with the words, 'The text published in the following pages may well be thought as surprising as any recovered from the soil of Egypt': I shall begin by defining what I take to be the principal grounds for our surprise.

First, the subject of the tragedy is without precedent in our records of Greek drama. It is concerned not with divine or heroic legend, or with contemporary events of interest to Athens, but with the ancient history of an Eastern race—the usurpation of the throne of Lydia by Gyges in the seventh century B.C. The story was already familiar to us from the *History* of Herodotus. Briefly: the King of Lydia, Kandaules, was infatuated with the beauty of his own wife; he persuaded Gyges, his chief counsellor and friend, to watch her undressing; she detected the plot, and compelled Gyges to kill Kandaules and to replace him as husband and as King.

Secondly, in view of the abnormality of the theme, and the evident survival of the play up to the beginning of the third century of the Christian era, it is astonishing that no mention of it, and with one possible exception no allusion to it, should have been preserved in our records of antiquity.

Thirdly, Mr Lobel's examination of the text led him to the conclusion that the play may be of very early date, indeed of the first third of the fifth century B.C.; and yet that the evidence is decidedly against its ascription to Aeschylus. Now we possessed hitherto nothing but small and comparatively unimportant scraps of Tragedy written by contemporaries or precursors of Aeschylus in the first third of the fifth century or earlier. Of Aeschylus himself, not more

than two or possibly three of the extant plays and a few fragments can certainly be assigned to that early period. It is clear that if the conclusion about the date is true, we are now enabled with the help of Herodotus to write part of a new and very early chapter in the history of Greek Drama.

§3. *The Story in Herodotus*

Fortune has been unusually favourable. If archaeologists in the future discover a similar short fragment of *Hamlet* beginning at the line 'Look now upon this picture, and on this'; or of *Macbeth*, beginning at the line 'But screw your courage to the sticking-place', they will be able to reconstruct with certainty in broad outline the plots of the entire plays. Our sixteen lines of Greek Tragedy are not less informative. And we can take a further step, for we have in the *History* of Herodotus a narrative which supplies much detail for the framework thus inferred. And, as if this were not enough, we find that Herodotus and our tragedian are not independent witnesses: one of them knew and copied the other's work. The similarity in choice of words and sequence of ideas is at one point so great that all reasonable likelihood of fortuitous coincidence appears to be excluded. Let us look at the chief point of overlap, and see how one repeats the other.

The Lydian Queen has just discovered the nature and author of the plot. The two writers tell the tale as follows:

Herodotus I. 10. 2	μαθοῦσα δὲ τὸ ποιηθὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρός
The Tragedian	τὸ δράσθην ἔγνων καὶ τίς ὁ δράσας ἀνὴρ
Herodotus	οὔτε ἀνέβωσε αἰσχυνθεῖσα
The Tragedian	καθεῖρξα . . . αἰσχύνῃς βοήν
Herodotus	οὔτε ἔδοξε μαθεῖν
The Tragedian	ὥς δ' ἄξυνήμων

One had the other in his hands or in his mind at this point.² It is possible that a dramatist, basing a play on this story, and having Herodotus's narrative in front of him, might reproduce Herodotus's sequence of ideas and choice of words from time to time. But the technical evidence (about which I shall say a word later) assigns the play to the generation before Herodotus; and the relation between the two is then the most natural imaginable. The play treated the story in full: Herodotus gives a rapid summary. That the former, the fuller version, should be antecedent to the latter, the summary, is a judgment not indeed logically demanded or even suggested, but at least in complete harmony with the indications of the technical evidence and the requirements of common sense.

If we now look more closely at the relation between the two, we shall observe that their agreement is even more extensive than it appears on the

surface. We shall see that the story in Herodotus is narrated in a succession of self-contained dramatic episodes such as might be expected in the summary of a play; that the character of the Queen is portrayed by both in the same vivid colour; and that the agreement between the two is particularly significant by contrast with the widely divergent versions of this story current in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

It may help to illustrate these points, and to make all I have to say less unintelligible, if I now translate (without the least embellishment) the story told by Herodotus. We shall be listening, if I am not mistaken, to a summary directly taken from the extraordinary play which is represented in our new text, a play on an unique theme by an unknown hand at a very early date.

The action is developed in three, or perhaps four, principal episodes. The first is summarized thus:

Kandaules, who was predestined to a bad end, spoke to Gyges as follows: 'Since you, Gyges, evidently disbelieve what I tell you about the beauty of my wife, man's ears being less trustworthy than his eyes, find a way of seeing her undressed.' Gyges gave a great shout: 'Master,' he said, 'what unwholesome talk is this, commanding me to see my queen naked! When a woman puts off her clothes, she puts off her modesty with them. Honest rules, from which we ought to take a lesson, were discovered long ago for man's behaviour. One of them is that a man should keep his eyes

on his own property. I do believe that your queen is the most beautiful of all women, and I beg you not to require me to break the law.' Thus he fought the King off, frightened of evil consequences. But the other replied: 'Be of good heart, Gyges. Have no fear of me, that I am saying this to test your loyalty, or of my wife, that any harm will come to you from her. I will so contrive it from the start, that she shall never even know that you saw her. I will take you to the chamber where we lie and place you behind the open door. After I have gone in, my wife in her turn will come to bed. There is a chair near the entrance: she will take off her garments and put them on it, one by one, giving you the chance to watch her at your leisure. When she walks from the chair to the bed, turning her back to you, make it your business to see that she does not observe you passing through the doorway.' Gyges, unable to escape, consented.

I suppose that nobody will be so perverse as to deny that here is abundant and appropriate material for a long and interesting dialogue between two sharply contrasted characters in a play.

The next episode is that which is partly represented in our new text. The Queen enters and recounts to the Chorus the story of the happenings of that night. The plot was carried out. Gyges hid behind the door, watched the Queen, and tried to slip out unobserved. But the Queen saw him. At first she could only guess who or what he might be:

When I saw clearly, not by guess, that it was Gyges, I was afraid of a plot for murder in the palace; for such are the wages of a monarch's state. But when I saw that Kandaules

was still awake, I knew what had been done and what man had done it. Yet as if ignorant, despite the turmoil in my heart I bridled in silence my dishonour's cry—

I pause there for a moment, for it would not be much to our credit if we passed, without noticing it, what must have been the turning-point of the whole play. In terms of physical action, the crisis of the play is of course the Queen's observing Gyges. But in terms of human spirit and will, it lies in the moment when the Queen 'checked her dishonour's cry'. The point is both more subtle and more significant than it appears at first sight. There are numerous passages in Attic drama which are rightly taken to prove that at Athens, as in other nations, a woman had no redress at law for an act of violence or outrage, if it could be shown that having the power to cry out for help she remained silent.³ It is a matter not of convention or of common sense, but of law. She must raise the alarm at once if it is in her power to do so: otherwise her case will not be admitted to court at all, or alternatively her evidence will not be accepted. So here, by checking her instant impulse to raise the alarm, the Queen has put herself outside the protection of the law. For the Athenian audience, accustomed to this motif, the Queen's deliberate inaction has a meaning which we must not overlook. That audience knew at once what the sequel must be. The Queen's wrongs must now be righted not by

law or openly, but in secret, against the law, in accordance with an individual's passion for revenge.

The Queen continues:

My night was endless for want of sleep, as in my bed to and fro I turned in anxious thought. And when the brilliant star that brings the dawn arose, forerunner of the first gleam of day, I roused Kandaules from bed and sent him forth to deliver law to his people. Persuasion's tale was ready on my lips, the one that forbids a King, the guardian of his people, to sleep the whole night through. As for Gyges, summoners have gone to call him to my presence. . . .

It is evident that the Queen's interview with Gyges will follow presently in the play; in Herodotus, it follows forthwith:

He came at her call, supposing her to know nothing of the deed. It was indeed customary for him to attend the Queen at her summons. So when Gyges came the lady spoke as follows: 'There are now two roads in front of you, Gyges, and I give you the choice, which one you will turn along. You shall either kill Kandaules and be master of myself and of the Lydian kingdom; or you must yourself be killed here and now, to prevent you for the future from seeing forbidden sights out of excess of loyalty to Kandaules. One of you must die: either the man who devised the plot, or you who saw me naked in defiance of the law.' Gyges listened awhile in bewilderment. Then he implored her not to compel him to so hard a choice. However he could not move her; he saw the dilemma inescapable before him—either he must kill his master, or somebody would kill him. He preferred his own survival, and put this question: 'Since you compel me against my will to slay my master, let me hear just how we are to set

upon him.' 'The attack shall come', she replied, 'from the same place whence he showed me naked; while he sleeps you shall set upon him.'

It is again perfectly obvious that here is abundant material for a long and exciting episode on the stage. Indeed there is sufficient for two episodes. Gyges may be given time to make up his mind. His reluctant acquiescence, and the formulation of the plot to murder Kandaules, would provide material enough for a separate episode.

It is certain, on the present hypothesis, that the murder of Kandaules will be reported on the stage, probably by either Gyges or the Queen. The outlines are given by Herodotus:

The plan was prepared, and night fell. There was no release, no way out, for Gyges. Either he or Kandaules must die. So he followed the woman to the bedchamber. She put a dagger in his hand, and hid him behind the very same door. And presently, while Kandaules was asleep, he crept out and murdered him. That is how Gyges got the woman and the kingdom.

We should be much wanting in imagination if we could not reconstruct an appropriate episode on this basis. We need have only one doubt: whether the conclusion of the story in Herodotus represents the conclusion of the drama:

The Lydians were enraged at what had happened to Kandaules, and were up in arms. But an agreement was made

between the partisans of Gyges and the rest of the Lydians, that if the Delphic oracle should pronounce him to be King of Lydia, King he should be; otherwise he must restore the crown to the Heraclid family. The oracle did so pronounce and that is how Gyges became King. The priestess, however, added that the Heraclids would have their revenge in the fifth generation from Gyges.

We can clearly recognize here a suitable termination for a Greek drama.

It is thus easy to state the case that Herodotus's narrative is developed in a series of episodes highly characteristic of Attic Tragedy; and that where the new dramatic fragment overlaps his narrative, he gives an accurate summary, at one point repeating his original almost verbatim. We observe too with particular attention the nature of the Queen's plot against the King: it is nothing but a reversal of his own plot against her. The plan, the place, the hour, the instrument shall be the same: only the parts of plotter and victim shall be reversed. It would not be easy to think of a transaction more perfectly in accord with the spirit of Greek Tragedy.

And now let nobody say that we are wise, if at all, after the event. More than one reader had observed, and at least one of them had argued in print thirty years ago, that Herodotus's narrative is in effect nothing but a prose version of an Attic Tragedy (see p. 27).

§4. *The character of the Queen*

It is a matter of objective fact that the character of the Queen as revealed in our new text is exactly what we were expecting from the portrait in Herodotus. The historian depicts her as a masterful woman of quick intelligence and ruthless decision. She instantly divines the nature and author of the insult put upon her. At daybreak she calls for Gyges and browbeats him into submission. She is formidable, dominating. It is she, not Gyges, who devises the plan for murder; she who leads the way to ambush; she who even puts the dagger into his hand.⁴ Gyges does nothing but ask for orders and obey them. Sixteen lines of our play are enough to reveal a Queen of the same character, quick-thinking, ruthless, masterful. She has only to see that her husband is awake, and all is instantly clear to her. He is awake: therefore he must have seen Gyges, as she did. But he made no outcry: therefore he must be an accomplice. (I shall say more on this point in a moment.) She has perfect control of violent emotions, and makes the irrevocable decision instantly: 'Despite the turmoil in my heart, I bridled in silence my dishonour's cry.' She passes the night sleepless beside a King already doomed. Something, perhaps much, of her character is portrayed at the end. Here is a Queen whose King must be up and doing before daybreak, who will not think it extraordinary if he is

thrust out of bed in the dark, sent about his business, pursued by improving maxims: 'Before daybreak', she says, 'I roused him from bed, and sent him about his business with an apt sentence from Homer about the importance of early rising for a conscientious King. As for Gyges, I have sent for him....' We tremble for Gyges. Herodotus's portrait of the Queen's demeanour in the painful interview which follows is exactly what we should expect to find in a continuation of our play.

The story, we saw, was perfectly suited to dramatic representation: it is now clear that much art has been displayed in the designing of the characters; though of course we do not know whether the design was well or ill executed in detail. There is the doomed, infatuated King, whose own plan will be turned to his destruction; there is unhappy Gyges, bullied first by his King and then by his Queen into criminal enterprises; and above all there is the dominant Queen, burning with shame and anger, cold and ruthless in the execution of revenge. It would be very far from rash to suppose that the characters of this play were in the mind of Aeschylus when he created his doomed, proud Agamemnon; Aegisthus, the weaker accomplice who kills the King and marries the Queen; and above all the ruthless and masterful Clytemnestra. Kandaules' Queen will be the earliest, at least the earliest known to us, of the terrible

heroines of Tragic drama, the prototype of Clytemnestra, Medea, and their infinite posterity. It may be thought the chief of our grounds for surprise, if we find here, in a Tragedy more or less contemporary with Aeschylus's *Persians*, a study of feminine psychology comparable in principle (though not necessarily in portrayal) with the work of Euripides in *Medea* and *Hippolytus*; a play in which the action springs from a woman's sense of insult and outrage.

§ 5. *Herodotus and the Dramatist: alleged differences*

My opinion here differs from that of Mr Lobel, who speaks of 'significant differences' between Herodotus and the play. These are as follows:

First: 'In the play, the Queen expects Kandaules to be asleep. In Herodotus, Kandaules is just, she not yet, abed.' I doubt whether this is a point of much importance; and I also doubt whether it is true. For I see no reason to suppose that the Queen in the play 'expects Kandaules to be asleep'. She may very well expect him to be *awake*. She looks at him to see whether in fact he is awake or not. For if he is, he must have seen Gyges leaving the room; and then his silence would prove him an accomplice in the offence. She sees that he is, as she expected, awake; and makes the natural inference. It is alternatively tenable that since her first suspicion is of murder, and the murderer is in the act of departure, she expects

Kandaules to be neither awake nor asleep, but *dead*. When she sees that he is not dead, but alive and indeed wide-awake, she knows that he must be an accomplice.

Secondly: 'In the play, the Queen dwells on having got her husband out of the way and sent for Gyges before daybreak. In Herodotus, she sends for Gyges "as soon as day had come".' I find nothing significant here. It makes no essential difference, whether the time was dawn or an hour before dawn. The play says, 'when the harbinger of dawn appeared'; Herodotus in his brief summary says, 'at daybreak'; surely a reasonable paraphrase of a point of small importance.

Thirdly: 'In the play, the queen seeing a man in the room jumps first to the not unnatural conclusion that murder is intended. There is no place for this detail in Herodotus, since Gyges is in the act of going out of the room when he is detected.' But the fact that Gyges is detected in the act of leaving the room is not at all inconsistent with his having committed a murder; still less with his having intended a murder, that intention being frustrated by the entry of the Queen; and there was nothing to prevent Herodotus saying, if he had wished to do so: 'the Queen, who saw Gyges in the act of departure, at first thought he was a murderer; on reflection, however, she understood the truth.' But this detail

of the Queen's first mistaken impression is of no importance whatever to the development of Herodotus's narrative. Herodotus gives us the facts, not the fancies: the Queen saw Gyges leaving the room, and guessed what her husband had done. He has omitted her first false impression, which is irrelevant to the subsequent course of the action; he could easily have included it, if there had been any reason why he should do so.

Fourthly: 'In the play, the queen infers Kandaules' responsibility for Gyges' presence from the fact that he is awake (and yet unconcerned). In the story, as Herodotus tells it, there is no ground for the queen's certitude that Kandaules is to blame. Gyges might have been impelled by a curiosity of his own.' There is no doubt about the facts: but they are consistent with, or even favourable to, the present hypothesis that Herodotus is summarizing the content of the drama. An entire tragedy is being epitomized in a few hundred words: it is enough for the development of Herodotus's narrative that the audience be informed that the Queen learnt the truth. The question, *how* she learnt it, is of no importance to the future course of the action. It is not as if Herodotus gave an explanation different from that given in the play: he gives no explanation at all, and we might therefore have inferred that he is taking what he needs, and omitting what he does not need, from

a fuller version of the story. He has confined himself to essentials, omitting the detail of methods and motives.

It seems to me demonstrable that there is nothing in Herodotus *incompatible* with the play; and the few *differences* are all just what we might expect in an epitome.

§6. *Some other versions of the story*

The similarity of Herodotus's narrative to that implied by the new dramatic fragment appears the more significant, since other sources give fundamentally different accounts.⁵ Plato has a famous, and fabulous, story about a magic ring, which renders Gyges invisible when he turns it on his finger; he employs its magic to kill the King and obtain the Queen and kingdom.⁶ It is obvious that this ambitious adventurer, who can make himself invisible at will, is not the Gyges who has to be bullied into hiding behind doors, 'distilled almost to jelly with the act of fear'. There is not only no mention of the magic ring in Herodotus: there is no possible room for it.⁷ To the historian Xanthus, in the late fifth century, a third and altogether different story is ascribed.⁸ Gyges was sent to fetch the King's bride, a lady named Toudo. On the way home he fell in love with her himself, violently but in vain. The virtuous princess complained to her bridegroom the

King, who swore that he would execute Gyges tomorrow. So during the night Gyges, warned by an amorous maidservant, murdered the King. Neither Plato's nor Herodotus's narrative can be reconciled with these romantic adventures; of which there is no further mention in our tradition.

Such were the irreconcilable accounts current at the end of the fifth century, and it is very doubtful whether later tradition has anything of importance to add.⁹ Of some interest, if only one could believe a word he says, is the evidence of Ptolemaeus Chennus,¹⁰ whose *New History* was written probably in the latter part of the first century A.D. According to this dilettante, 'the wife of Kandaules was called Nysia. Her eyes had double pupils, and she was extremely sharp-sighted, being the possessor of the dragon-stone. That is how she came to see Gyges as he passed through the door.' This sounds like an answer, or rather two different answers, to the question, 'How could the Queen see Gyges?'—for in one version he was invisible, in the other he was creeping out of a dark room behind the Queen's back. That such questions were indeed asked and answered in the schools and salons of the Roman world is proved by Nicolaus, whose *Preparatory Exercises* include a section entitled ὅτι οὐκ εἰκότα τὰ κατὰ Κανδαύλην, 'Improbabilities in the story of Kandaules'.¹¹ The false presuppositions of Hero-

dotus's narrative are exposed to the attentive classroom. How ridiculous, to found a story on the assumption that an oriental King was enamoured of his own wife; or that Lydian Queens undressed before going to bed; how careless, not to notice that if Gyges can see the Queen, the Queen must be able to see Gyges; and so forth. Ptolemaeus is expert in finding answers to such questions as these. The Queen had abnormal eyesight; or alternatively she possessed a dragon-stone which enabled her to see the invisible. We may confidently judge that this is nothing but a smooth answer to a silly question.

Philostratus, in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, tells of the wonderful stone secreted in the heads of Indian snakes, λίθους τὸ μὲν εἶδος ἀνθρώπους... τὴν δὲ ἰσχὺν ἀρρήτους κατὰ τὸν δακτύλιον ὃν γενέσθαι φασὶ τῷ Γύγι.¹² It has been maintained¹³ that the author must have had in mind a version of the story in which the magic ring of Gyges was countered by a Queen with a dragon-stone; but the words mean only that the stones were 'unspeakably powerful *after the fashion of Gyges' ring*', that is to say, they had the power of conferring invisibility, *like Gyges' ring*.

I dismiss this topic as irrelevant. To a superficial view, it might appear that the reason why Kandaules, according to Herodotus, tells Gyges to 'make it his own business to see that the Queen does not observe

him passing through the door', and why Gyges, when summoned by the Queen next morning, 'supposed that she knew nothing of the deed', is that Gyges used the magic ring to make himself invisible, and that Kandaules was aware that he would use it. But the evidence of our play proves that the dramatist made no use either of Gyges' ring or of any super-natural powers in the Queen. In giving her reason for inferring that her husband is an accomplice, she states that she saw that he was still awake: he must therefore have seen Gyges, as she did, leaving the room. But if Gyges was invisible, she could make no such inference: the King cannot see the invisible, whatever powers the Queen may have. Therefore Gyges was not invisible. And for the same reason, there can have been no mention of abnormal eyesight in the Queen. For the Queen makes it clear that whatever she sees, the King too can see if he is awake.

§7. *The evidence for the early date*

This is not the most suitable occasion for presenting and establishing in detail the technical arguments in favour of a very early date for this play; nor have I much to add to Mr Lobel's observations. I shall state the facts briefly and simply, and leave their proof to the notes at the end. The strength of the evidence lies partly in one particular point in the

structure of the verse, and partly in the aggregate of phenomena.

We observe, first, that our fragment includes no example of the substitution of two short syllables for one long one; secondly, that most—possibly all—of the lines more or less fully preserved have stops, light or heavy, at the end; and thirdly, that the vocabulary has something in common with that of Aeschylus,¹⁴ and nothing which might incline us to refer it to any later era. None of these points is individually of much significance. Avoidance of resolved syllables is characteristic of our scanty remains of fourth-century Tragedy;¹⁵ the pause at the end of the line is hardly commoner in the *Supplices* of Aeschylus than in the *Bacchae* of Euripides;¹⁶ and it would be possible to find in relatively late plays passages of comparable length which bear marked affinity to the style of the earliest Tragedy. In aggregate, the three points have a certain weight: but they will do little to incline the balance until they are combined with a particular point of metrical technique about which it is possible to speak more precisely and emphatically.

In all four places where vowels short by nature stand before two consonants, of which the first is a mute and the second a liquid or nasal, those vowels are scanned as long: προῆδραμεν, ἔγρησσοντα, ὁ δρασας, αὔπνιος.¹⁷ In respect both of quantity and

of quality this phenomenon is of great and perhaps decisive significance. For the earliest writers of iambics in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. it is a rule strictly enforced; for the Attic tragedians of the fifth century it is an exception rarely admitted. There is probably no exception at all in the iambics of Archilochus and Semonides:¹⁸ but we should need, in the average, about 280 lines of Aeschylus or Sophocles, and about 180 of Euripides, to produce the same number of examples as we find here in some twenty lines.¹⁹ Our short fragment has as many examples as there are in the whole of Aeschylus's *Supplikes* or *Seven against Thebes*, half as many as in the whole of *Agamemnon* or Sophocles' *Antigone*. Our second column presents three examples, and none contrary, in sixteen lines. We may be as cautious as we like about admitting an argument based on so short a passage: the fact remains that there is no other such passage in the whole of Aeschylus and Sophocles, and not more than a couple in the whole of Euripides.²⁰

It is however to be admitted that this evidence would be consistent, in respect of quantity alone, with the assignment of our play to a very much *later* date—the age of Tragedy's decadence in the fourth century B.C.²¹ We therefore turn from quantity to quality, and observe two phenomena which conform to a law strictly observed by the earliest writers

of iambics but quite out of harmony with the conventions of Attic Tragedy at all periods for which evidence is available. In col. ii. 5 ὁ δράσας, the two consonants have the power of lengthening a preceding short syllable which is not contained within the same word. It has been generally held since Porson that this, the regular practice of the early Ionian writers, was inadmissible in Attic Tragedy at least from the time of Aeschylus onwards.²² Finally, in col. i. 15 προἔδραμεν, we have a possible example of this lengthening where the short vowel is the syllabic augment of a verb;²³ again, the invariable practice of the early Ionian writers,²⁴ but so much at variance with Attic pronunciation that we shall find only ten examples in 30,000 lines of Tragedy.²⁵

It is thus easy to demonstrate that the quantity and quality of these phenomena in so small a space, highly characteristic of Ionian poetry of the seventh and sixth centuries, are without parallel in the extensive remains of Attic Tragedy. The whole of the remainder of the evidence either confirms or is consistent with this eloquent testimony that our fragment is part of a very early tragedy, the work of a poet still subject to influences from which Aeschylus appears comparatively emancipated.

We have passed no judgment yet upon the quality of the poet's art, a less articulate but not much less emphatic witness. I think it likely that many readers

of the Queen's speech will judge that it is of high quality, closer in style to Aeschylus than to any other writer known to us. In force and lucidity of language, in power of narrative, and in portrayal of character, this poet was among the masters, and in particular among the old masters. I do not suggest that we could accept this testimony if it were not confirmed by more circumstantial witnesses; those who believe that *Rhesus* was written in the fourth century will have no aesthetic reason to deny the same date to our play. But I do suggest that style repeats, and is confirmed by, the evidence of technique.

The facts then speak firmly in favour of an early date. How early, we can only judge within broad limits. If it is true that Aeschylus first introduced a second actor into the performance of Tragedy, this play—which surely required two actors—cannot be earlier than the early part of the fifth century B.C. If we place it in the first quarter of that century, we shall have the comfort of reflecting that we have judged according to the evidence.

§8. *The Theme*

Attic Tragedy almost invariably took its themes from Heroic legend. A few exceptions are known, 'in which the subject is taken from recent events closely affecting an Athenian audience':²⁶ such are the *Persians* of Aeschylus, the *Capture of Miletus*

and the *Phoenician Women* (perhaps too the *Persians*) of Phrynichus; in the fourth century we hear of a *Themistocles* by Moschion and a *Mausolus* by Theodectes. In the later period, moreover, fictitious plots were not unknown: we have it on the authority of Aristotle that 'even in Tragedy there are some plays with but one or two known names in them, the rest being inventions; and there are some without a single known name, e.g. Agathon's *Anthos*, in which both incidents and names are of the poet's invention'.²⁷

Now it seems one thing to write a play about a recent event of such importance and interest to the Athenian audience as the battle of Salamis or the capture of Miletus; and quite another thing, to write about events in a non-Hellenic state two hundred years before. But we shall not admit this difference without making certain reservations. First, we observe that the only three or four historical tragedies which we know to have been written before the middle of the fourth century B.C. were all composed in the early period, the first third of the fifth century. If on other grounds our play is assigned to that early period, we see that the fact that it had, generally speaking, an historical theme, is consistent with our conclusion about its date. Secondly, the essential point of difference between our play and the other historical plays—the fact that it deals with ancient

history, not apparently connected with Athens in the fifth century—may be less significant than we are at first disposed to believe. It is nothing new that a Greek Tragedian should go back to the past to explain the present; and the earlier our play, the more likely that it was one of a *trilogy*, three successive plays representing the fortunes of a person or family through a series of generations.

Thirty years ago an American scholar, Mr Kirby Smith, who made a most careful study of the development of the story of Gyges and Kandaules from Herodotus to Gide, concluded his work with the following words:

When Herodotus took this tale...he developed it on the lines of Greek Tragedy. In fact it is actually a parallel in prose to such dramas as the *Agamemnon* or *Oedipus Tyrannus*. As Herodotus tells the story, the theme is the folly of Candaules and its punishment. Candaules is an illustration of that mysterious and relentless power of Ate, which is so characteristic of the Tragedy and of the Hellenic conception of sin and its consequences....It is quite certain that every Greek who read the story of Herodotus took it for granted that the curse did not and could not die with Candaules. ...Gyges and the Queen cannot go scot-free. The curse lives on, and the day will surely come when they or their descendants must pay the bill in full.²⁸

We can only be surprised at the subject-matter of our Tragedy if we regard it in isolation; but we know that we are not justified in so regarding it. We

are aware of the early practice of writing trilogies, and of the predilection of the greatest of the early dramatists for tracing the history of present calamity back to an original sin. We should find nothing paradoxical in the news, if we heard it, that an early dramatist had written a trilogy expounding and explaining the triumph of the Hellenes over Lydia: that in the first play he described how the founding of Gyges' dynasty contained in itself the seed of future disaster; in the second play illustrated the development of the curse which therefore afflicted the house; and in the third, expounded the bad end to which the family came, either in the fall of Croesus (Hdt. 1.90), or in the burning of Sardis by Athenians and others in 498 B.C. So easy it is to show that a small piece of additional evidence, wholly in harmony with the known methods and morals of early Athenian drama, would remove most of the ground for surprise at the subject-matter of our play.

Nor must we overlook the fact that the representation of barbarian characters, fantastic in dress and eccentric in manners, was enormously popular in the earliest period, and in that period alone, of Attic drama.²⁹ Athenian art in the sixth century B.C. shows a lively interest in barbarians, portraying with particular skill and joy their outlandish clothes. And the interest of Athens generally in the history and geography of the Near and Middle East in the earlier

part of the fifth century B.C. needs no demonstration here. If now we look at our records of Attic drama in this early period, we shall find nothing much more remarkable than its preoccupation with the non-Hellenic world. Not many facts are recorded about the early Tragedian Phrynichus; most of them bear upon this point. In one of his plays, the Chorus and a principal character were Egyptians; in another, the Chorus consisted of Libyans; in another, the Chorus was composed of Palestinian women, and the prologue was spoken by an oriental eunuch, who prepared the scene for the entry of the Persian senate; if the notices about his *Persians* and *Tantalus* are trustworthy, we shall draw similar conclusions about the nationality of their Choruses and actors; and we may be confident that orientals played a great part, directly or indirectly, in his *Capture of Miletus*. The two earliest plays of Aeschylus tell in considerable detail the same tale of paramount interest in barbarian history, religion, languages, and customs. The Chorus of the *Suppliants* consists of women from Egypt, whose dusky faces peep through a head-dress covering mouth, chin, and forehead; towards the end of the play there enters an equally outlandish Chorus of Egyptian men. In his *Persians*, the poet reveals much knowledge of Persian history and habits, and fills his scene with persons eccentrically attired—Darius in saffron-coloured boots,

Xerxes in the tatters of royal Persian robes, an oddly dressed Chorus of Persian senators who lift up their voices in Mariandynian dirges and Mysian groans. These facts, and others, are well enough established; there is a further article of evidence less commonly recognized. We know the titles of some seventy tragedies by Aeschylus, many of them named after their Choruses. At least one quarter, and perhaps as many as one third, of all the tragedies of Aeschylus had barbarian Choruses; of those which may have had Choruses of Greeks, some had barbarian actors. We find Phrygians, Egyptians, Persians, Thracians, Carians, Mysians, Lydians in the Chorus; in one play the principal actor was a realistically equipped Abyssinian, a joy for ever to the Attic comedian and his audience.

If we were looking for a suitable literary-historical setting for a play with barbarian actors and Chorus, we cannot now be in the least doubt that we have found it in the heyday of Phrynichus and Aeschylus. It is indeed remarkable how consistently the evidence has pointed in that direction.

§9. *The Chorus*

There is some reason to believe that in the first of the three columns partly preserved in the papyrus the Queen is addressing a Chorus.³⁰ Now if it is true that Herodotus is summarizing the play, the question

arises: what was the structure of the play preceding this moment? It is obvious that the dramatist has a difficulty here; and the earlier the play, the greater the difficulty. Whoever listens to the King's plot against the Queen must not betray it to her; and whoever listens to the Queen's plot against the King must not betray it to him. Impartiality is not characteristic of the Chorus in early Tragedy: a mute inactive dummy will be a nuisance.³¹

It is possible that the antecedent events were told by Gyges or by Kandaules or by a third party in soliloquy, in the absence of a Chorus. But it seems much more probable that the plot was unfolded in the form, preserved by Herodotus, of a dialogue between Gyges and Kandaules. Since that dialogue must have been of considerable length and importance, it would be interesting to know whether it was conducted in the presence of a Chorus. For, if so, it is likely to have been a Chorus different from that which attends the Queen in our first column. And the employment in one play of two Choruses, especially of *rival* Choruses, has been thought to be a sign or rudiment of great antiquity, whether the Choruses are present on the scene at the same moment (as in our oldest play) or successively (as elsewhere).³² We should naturally suppose that the King was attended by his counsellors, of whom Gyges was chief; and that the dialogue between

Kandaules and Gyges was virtually a dialogue between King and Chorus-leader, a technique identical with that of the first episode of our earliest extant Tragedy. The King's counsellors must then have left the scene together with their King and their chief, their place being taken in the orchestra by a Chorus of women. The former were partisans of the King, the latter are partisans of the Queen: the problem of the single impartial Chorus has been solved.

Mr Lobel suggested, on other grounds, that the author of our play might be the older contemporary of Aeschylus, Phrynichus: and we observe that the employment of two Choruses in one play has been held to be attested for Phrynichus. Certainly the evidence about his *Phoenissae* suggests that the earlier part of that play fulfilled conditions similar to those suggested by the requirements of a play on the subject of Gyges and the Queen. What is actually stated is that Phrynichus began his play with a speech by a Persian eunuch, who, while preparing thrones for the King's counsellors, reported the defeat of Xerxes.³³ It is reasonably inferred that the Persian counsellors, for whom this preparation is made, will enter the scene before long. And then it is difficult to see what part they can have played, except more or less that of a Chorus. But it is established that the Chorus in this play consisted not of Persian senators

but of Sidonian women.³⁴ Different opinions have been held. Schmidt-Staehlin speak openly,³⁵ Kranz more cautiously, of *two Chorus*s; Wilamowitz³⁶ and others³⁷ pronounce that if seats are prepared for the senators they must do nothing but sit down; they must be mute but interested persons, like the Areopagites in the *Eumenides*, not speaking, singing, or dancing, but simply sitting down. Now whether they performed any or all or none of the functions of a Chorus, we do not know: we can only be sure that the same technique—the early entry of the King's counsellors, whether as a Chorus or as a mute substitute for a Chorus, and the later entry of a Chorus of women—would fulfil the requirements of a play (*any* play) with the plot summarized by Herodotus.

§ 10. *The Silence of the Ancients*

Nothing is more surprising about this fragment than the silence of antiquity about the drama of which it is part. There is no mention of any play on this subject at any date: yet now we know that there was indeed such a play; and we see that its existence might have been inferred from the inclusion of this story in a catalogue of apparently Tragic themes in Achilles Tatius.³⁸

It is not as if the narratives of Herodotus and Plato were soon forgotten; on the contrary they were remembered as well, and for as long, as any passage

of classical literature. Gyges' ring became proverbial,³⁹ the adornment of many a dull page from Theon to Tzetzes. Plato's narrative is one of four mythical tales recommended for learning by heart in schools in the second century A.D.;⁴⁰ Herodotus's narrative is chosen by Dionysius of Halicarnassus to illustrate the importance of composition in style; by Libanius as a model for an academic summary; and by Nicolaus as a subject for literary criticism at school. Some of Herodotus's phrases and maxims in this passage came to enjoy a peculiar existence as independent clichés and proverbs.⁴¹ It is abundantly proven that the stories which we read to-day in the *Republic* of Plato and the *History* of Herodotus were firmly established in the curriculum of school education for over a thousand years.⁴² Yet nobody at any time says a word about the ancient Tragedy, so similar to Herodotus, so different from Plato, on the same theme; a Tragedy which we now know to have been in the hands of readers in Egypt as late as the end of the second century A.D.

Whatever the date of the play (within reasonable limits), the silence of antiquity is a surprising fact; I can make no useful comment on it. The special interest of this drama for the learned men of the ancient world arose not by any means from its alleged early date; the peculiar subject-matter, and its relation to the celebrated narratives in Plato and

Herodotus, must (one would have thought) have made it memorable.

§ II. *Alexandrian Tragedy*

In conclusion, let us briefly consider an opinion which is not unlikely to find some patronage: that our play was not very early but very late, indeed a product of the Hellenistic era. On this point I should venture two general propositions: first, that there is nothing in the available evidence which supports the opinion; secondly, that it would not mitigate the principal difficulties which the new fragment may be thought to present. We admit at once that the theory could not be positively refuted. We know almost nothing about Hellenistic Tragedy: and where almost nothing is known, almost anything may be, and usually is, advanced as being theoretically possible. We can only say that the little that is known is not in favour of the theory.

We know that tragedies were written and acted in very large numbers in the Hellenistic era.⁴³ The names of over sixty tragedians are recorded, and some of them are said to have written a large number of plays: Sosiphanes 73, Timon 70, Homer 45. It was thought surprising that a pre-Sophoclean play should deal with ancient history apparently unconnected with Athens: but then we find no evidence that Alexandria will afford a more congenial home.

For the fifty titles of Hellenistic Tragedy known to us include not a single one comparable in this respect with the new fragment. Indeed it is doubtful whether more than a couple of historical subjects—the *Themistocles* of Philicus and the *Κασανδρείς* of Lycophron⁴⁴—are to be identified: legend, often enough the by-ways of legend, are still the principal source, almost the only source, for Tragic plots. We have then no more evidence for assigning our play to the Hellenistic than to the Aeschylean era. And the general consideration, that the Alexandrians were much addicted to novelty in many shapes, will carry little weight: for no age was richer in invention and change than that of Aeschylus and Phrynichus, when the second actor was introduced, feminine characters first impersonated, recent historical events made the subject of Tragedy, the dress of actors reformed, and machines designed in order to display divinities at a becoming altitude.

Again, it may be thought surprising that a pre-Sophoclean tragedy, of which no extant author shows the least knowledge, on this peculiar subject, should have survived to the third century A.D. But then how would it help, to refer the composition of the play to the Hellenistic era? We have no reason to deny that some plays of Phrynichus—no doubt only a few—survived into the Hellenistic era. The sources of the extant fragments of Phrynichus suggest that

some of his plays were studied and excerpted by the early lexicographers, metricians, and grammarians. We have then no reason to be surprised at the discovery of further evidence for the survival of a play by a contemporary of Aeschylus into—and therefore well beyond—the golden age of Alexandrian scholarship. On the other hand we should be very surprised indeed to hear that a Hellenistic Tragedy survived into the third century A.D. Nothing in the history of the transmission of Greek drama is much more remarkable than the earliness, totality and permanence of the eclipse of Hellenistic Tragedy. Stone-inscriptions, recording successful performances, preserved the names of many playwrights and the titles of a very small proportion of their plays; but out of a number of lines which it would be absurdly conservative to put as low as a million, *twenty-two* survived in anthologies up to Stobaeus, and *four* are known from other sources. Already in the first century A.D. nobody can, or at least nobody does, show familiarity with the text of a single Hellenistic Tragedy. It is obvious that this great body of literature had passed wholly out of circulation long before the date of our new fragment; and that is a general rule to which we know not a single exception. The surprise which we may feel at the unnoticed survival of our play would be rather increased than diminished by its ascription to the Hellenistic era.

Finally, I suggest that we look again at the language and style of our text: we shall find the dignity, simplicity and reserve of the early period; where in it shall we find any of those features which we associate with Alexandrian literature of any type?

§12. *Conclusion*

I was afraid that the title of this lecture might be thought pretentious; it will now at least be admitted that it is accurate. This exceptionally interesting discovery, howsoever it may be interpreted, does obviously constitute a new chapter in the history of Greek Tragedy. I have presumed to do no more than call attention to some of the problems presented, and here and there to suggest the way of approach to an answer.⁴⁵

NOTES

[1] *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. xxxv (1950), pp. 1-12, with plate.

[2] The dramatist goes on to say 'just before daybreak...'; Herodotus continues similarly 'at daybreak...'. I have ignored the possibility, which seems to me very remote, that both are borrowing from a common source.

[3] The case is established by Schulze, *Berl. Sitzb.* (1918), pp. 481 ff. (= *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 160 ff.). From his exposition of the nature and ramifications of this important law I take only the particular point which bears on our text. Eur. *Tro.* 998 ff. (quoted by Schulze) is a good illustration.

[4] Hdt. 1.12.1, καὶ μὴν ἐκείνη ἐγχεῖριδιον δοῦσα κτλ.

[5] For what follows, see especially K. F. Smith, *Amer. J. Philol.* xxiii (1902), pp. 261 ff. (= Smith¹), pp. 362 ff. (= Smith²), xli (1920), pp. 1 ff. (= Smith³).

[6] *Republic* 359 D: Smith¹, p. 268 n. 2, says that there is no other example of a Ring of Invisibility before the Middle Ages, except Pliny *N.H.* xxxiii. 8 (on which see Smith¹, pp. 273 f.).

[7] Smith¹, pp. 281 f., tries in vain to reconcile the two stories.

[8] Nicolaus of Damascus 90 F 47 (Jacoby); cf. Jacoby's commentary on Nic. Dam. II C, p. 244. Whether the source was indeed Xanthus I leave others to judge.

[9] (a) Smith², pp. 363 ff., is unconvincing on the subject of the narrative in Justin-Trogus 1. 7. 14: Justin's text here is a turgid and slovenly summary of Herodotus; there is no variation which is not at once explicable through stupidity, carelessness, or the love of rhetoric. It is surely improper to use this passage as evidence that 'the old folk-tale used by Plato and Herodotus contained not only the erotic episode [a love-affair between Gyges and the Queen]...but...also...the two great motifs of [Herodotus's] version; the folly of Kandaules and the Queen's revenge'.

(b) Plutarch *Aet. Gr.* 45 (II. 359 f. Nachst.-Siev.-Titchener) tells a fourth different story: Gyges rebelled and fought a war against Kandaules, who was killed in action against Gyges and his ally Arsellis of Mylasa; in its context this reads like a local aetiological variant, outside the main stream of tradition. Frazer, *Adonis, Attis and Osiris* I, pp. 182 f., has some interesting observations on this version.

(c) Tzetzes twice (*Chil.* I, 162 ff., VII. 195 ff.) alleges that the *Queen* was the owner of the magic ring, and that it was she who gave it to Gyges: I see no support for this in any older version of the story.

(d) The remainder of the references are dependent on either Herodotus (Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 16; Ptolem. Chennus; Justin; Nicolaus *Rh. Gr.* I, p. 287 W.; Liban. VIII, p. 43 F.; schol. Aristid. XLV. 56, iii, p. 411 D.; Agathias *A.P.* VII. 567; Tzetz. *Chil.* I. 137 ff., VI. 481 ff., VII. 195 ff.) or Plato (Cic. *Off.* III. 9; Theon *Rh. Gr.* I, p. 139 W.; Lucian *Bis Accus.* 21, *Navig.* 42; Philostr. *Her.* II. 132. 29 ff., *Vit. Apoll.* III. 8; anon. *epist.* (Aeschines to Xenophon p. 619. 43 Didot); Liban. *Or.* LVI. 10, LXIV. 35, *epist.* 1031 (*paroem. gr.* II, p. 20 L.-S.); Greg. Naz. *Or. contra Jul.* 35, p. 268 M., *Or.* XLIII. 21, *Carm.* I. 2. 30 (37, p. 685 M.); Nonnus *ad Greg. Naz. in vect.* I. 55 (mythogr. p. 366. xvi Westerm.); Tzetz. *Chil.* I. 137 ff., VII. 195 ff.; 'Eudocia' *Viol.* 247). The material is set out in full by Smith *ll. cc.* (for [Lucian] Λούκιος ἡ ὄνος 28, see Smith³, p. 23; Maas, *Gnomon*, 1950, p. 143 n. 1).

[10] Preserved in the extracts of Photius, *Bibl.* 150 B 19: ἡ Κανδαύλου γυνή, ἥς Ἡρόδοτος οὐ λέγει τοῦνομα, Νυσία ἐκαλεῖτο · ἦν καὶ δίκoron καὶ ὀξυωπεστάτην φασὶ γενέσθαι, τὸν δρακοντίτην κτησαμένην λίθον · διὸ καὶ αἰσθέσθαι τὸν Γύγην ἐξίόντα διὰ τῶν θυρῶν. For δίκoron, see K. F. Smith, 'Pupula Duplex', *Studies in Honor of B. L. Gildersleeve* (Baltimore, 1902), pp. 287 ff.

[11] *Rh. Gr.* I. p. 287 W.

[12] *Vit. Apoll.* III. 8.

[13] By Smith², pp. 371 ff.: he translated ἰσχυὸν ἀπρῆτους κατὰ τὸν δακτύλιον 'invincible even against the ring...', as if it were

κατὰ τοῦ δακτυλίου. He later acknowledged the oversight, but did not see that the correct translation destroyed his only useful argument.

[14] The poet has in common with Aeschylus especially: ἄξυνήμων, *Agam.* 1060, not recorded elsewhere; ξυνῆλιξ, *Pers.* 784, also in Comedy; προτοῦ, *Agam.* 1204, *Eum.* 462, also in Sophocles' *Ichneutae*, in Comedy and in prose; εἰκασμα, *Sept.* 523, though in a different sense; κλητήρ, *Suppl.* 622, *Sept.* 574, also in Ion of Chius *fr.* 49; τάπτεχαιρα, *PV.* 321, also in *adesp.* 116, cf. *Soph. Ant.* 820. Similar to ἐν δεινίῳ... στρωφωμένη is *Agam.* 1224, ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον.

Much longer is the list of novelties and rarities shared no more with Aeschylus than with others. Unique in the Greek language is the word πρωτοφειγής; unique in Attic literature is the old Epic word ἐγρήσσω; unique in Tragedy are δρασθέν, ἀπνία (*Pl. Leg.* 807 E), προάγγελος (not elsewhere before the Christian era), προτρέχω (*Antiphon, Xenophon, Isocrates*), ἑωσφόρος (*Hom. Il.* xxiii. 223, *Hes. Theog.* 381, *Pind. Isthm.* 4 (3). 24, cf. *Ibyc. fr.* 42 Bergk).

Unique in meaning are: εἰκασμα, whether 'apparition' or 'conjecture'; καρδίας κυκωμένης, a verb very rare in Tragedy, nowhere else used of mental disquiet except in Archilochus 67 A Diehl, θυμέ... κήδεσιν κυκώμενε, cf. *Solon* i. 61 Diehl; στρωφωμένη, apparently an unique use of this verb, whether it means 'going to and fro (in thought)' or 'tossing to and fro (with anxiety)'; θεμιστεύω τι, 'declare law and right to...', only in *Od.* xi. 569, the verb itself very rare in Tragedy (*Ion* 371, 'deliver oracles', *Bacch.* 79, ὄργια θεμιτεύων, 'keeping holy rites').

Other notable rarities are: ἀτέρ[μω]ν or ἀτερ[πής]; the former once in Aeschylus and Euripides, the latter twice in Aeschylus and once in Euripides; cf. *Isidorus fr.* 1; παμ[φας], once in Aeschylus and Sophocles, twice in Euripides; καθείρξα, a very rare word in Tragedy, here only with this metaphorical sense (*Pl. Gorg.* 461 D); κάξεπεμψάμην, a very rare use of the middle voice with the meaning 'send', not 'send for' (*Soph. Ajax* 612 lyr., cf. *Aesch. Pers.* 137, ἀποπεμψάμενα lyr.,

quoted by Lobel); λέχους ἡγείρα, the construction elsewhere only at Eur. *H.* 1050.

Almost all the evidence in the foregoing note is borrowed from Lobel's commentary. I see at present no way of avoiding, or of explaining, the peculiar use of the genitives in φόνου λόχος, αἰσχύνῃς βοή. ἐμοί in *vv.* 9, 13, where μοι might have been expected, requires (as Mr Gow has pointed out to me) more explanation than I can give; in 16, as Mr Gow observes, perhaps we ought to divide δ' ἐμοί.

[15] The sixth and ninth fragments of Moschion offer no resolutions in 44 lines. Sositheus has none in 21; the first fragment of Critias only 4 in 42. The *Supplices* and *Persae* of Aeschylus have (proportionately to the totals of iambic trimeters) nearly twice as many as the *Oresteia*. See further Ceadel, *C.Q.* xxxv (1941), pp. 88 f.

[16] In Eur. *Hel.* 1089-98 there are pauses at the end of 9 out of 10 consecutive lines; 1651-63, 12 out of 13; 1668-79, 10 out of 11; *Or.* 503-41, 33 out of 39.

[17] There is no reason to suppose that]προσκυνῶ at the end of col. i. 9 was preceded by a syllable scanned short; it might have been e.g. (δεσπότην) σὲ προσκυνῶ, οὐ προσκυνῶ, καὶ προσκυνῶ, etc.

[18] Archil. 28. 2 (Diehl), perhaps ἔβρυζεν ἢ Φρύξ; 50 is supposititious; Semon. 1. 13, perhaps βροτῶν | φθείρουσι νοῦσοι.

[19] Excluding consideration of βλ, γμ, γν, γλ, δμ, δν; and excluding in the case of Sophocles and Euripides examples of πᾶτρ- and τέκν- (which constitute well over half the total number of examples in Sophocles, and about one-third of all in Euripides); the following approximate statistics concerning the 33 wholly extant plays are relevant here: In Aeschylus and Sophocles such lengthening in spoken iambs and trochaics is relatively very rare; about once in 70 lines in Aeschylus, once in 75 in Sophocles; in Euripides it is rather commoner, but still only about once in 45 lines (*Rhesus*, about once in 40). Over three-fifths of all the examples are provided by a few common words:

μελᾶθρον 34, δᾶκρυ- 29, ἄκρο- 27, ἄγριος 21, ἄτρευσ, ἄτρεῖσαι 21, ὄπλ- 21, ὕβρι- 19, νεκρός 19, θυγαῖτρ- 17, ἀριθμ- 17, ὕπν- 16, ἔδρα and family 15, Ἡρᾶκλ- 15, ὄχλος 14, γενέθλ- 13, πέπλος 13, πέτρ- 12, ἰχν- 9, πῶτν- 8, σχῆτλι- 8, ἰδρυ- 8, ὄκν- 7.

[20] Unless I have miscounted, there is nothing in Aeschylus remotely comparable; not even *Pers.* 367–518, where the nine examples of lengthening in 152 verses are accompanied by more than twice the number of contrary examples. From Sophocles I refer only to *Ajax* 749–71, four examples with two contrary examples. In Euripides, the nearest parallels are *Med.* 1–33 (four, including the very common τέκν-, δᾶκρ-, πέτρ-, with only one contrary example); 1159–74 (three, only one contrary); *Hec.* 519–32 (three, only one contrary); *Heracles* 851–73 (trochaic: six, but including the common τέκν-, μελᾶθρ-, Ἡρᾶκλ-, with only three contrary examples); *Ion* 735–46 (three, and no contrary); *Phoen.* 1071–95 (four, and two contrary); *Or.* 83–127 has eight, but nine contrary; 293–315 has three, and none contrary; *IA.* 1338–67 has six, and as many contrary, in trochaics.

[21] The sixth and ninth fragments of Moschion reveal four examples of lengthening and none to the contrary in 59 lines.

[22] Porson on *Or.* 64. Among numerous discussions since, see Denniston on Eur. *El.* 1078. The most nearly certain example of this phenomenon in Attic Tragedy is Aesch. *Pers.* 782 νέος ἔων νέᾳ φρονεῖ (M.: νέος ὦν νέᾳ φρονεῖ *rell.*), Ionic dialect and prosody, defended by Headlam in *C.R.* xii (1898), pp. 189 f.; it is much easier to rewrite this than to account for the alleged corruption. In Eur. *Alc.* 542 παρὰ κλαιουσι, *El.* 1058 ἀρᾶ κλινουσα, alteration of the text is easy enough but not otherwise necessary. These are the only examples worth considering, for we cannot trust the tradition in the following: Aesch. *Cho.* 854 φρενᾶ κλ., φρέν' ἄν κλ. Elmsley; *fr.* 399. 1 εφημερᾶ φρονεῖ Stob. cod. *A.* εφημερία φρονεῖ cod. *S* and Apostolius, ἐφ' ἡμέραν or ἐφ' ἡμέραι edd.; Soph. *fr.* 832 (= 918 Pearson) παντ' ἐκκαλυπττων ο χρονος εις φως αγει, cf. Men. *Mon.* 459, παντ' ανακαλυπττων ο χρονος προς φως αγει, too easily squared to be thought a reliable witness; Eur. *Med.* 246 ηλικᾶ

τραπεις, easily altered to -ας or -ων, if it were worth while to rectify this spurious verse; *IA.* 636 διὰ χρόνου, a late interpolation; 971 αιματὶ χρανῶ, corrupt; 1579, Byzantine; *fr.* 402. 2 οὐτὶ πλεισταὶ Stobaeus, οὕτως πλ. Erfurdt; 411. 4 ἄ κρυπτεῖν Stobaeus, οὗς κρ. Dobree; 642. 1 παρὰ κρατηρὰ Stobaeus, variously corrigible; *adesp.* 518 οὐχ ὡς νομίζεις τὸ φρονεῖν εἰπας κακῶς, a line to which I can attach no meaning. Lycophron's *Alexandra* has a dozen instances; but we have no evidence about the practice of Alexandrian Tragedy in this respect.

[23] If προῆδρ- was intended. Lobel observes that προε- is always elsewhere contracted to προῦ- in Attic Tragedy, unless the epsilon bears the aspirate. Since however the contraction is equally characteristic of early Ionian iambography (*Archil.* 90 προῦθηκε, *Semon.* 20 προῆκπνεαι, *Hippon.* 5. 2 προῦπινεν; so also Anacreon—as indeed all Ionic dialects—invariably contracts -οε-) the inference to be drawn from προῆδρ- here would be obscure. See further Gow on Theocritus xxv. 254.

[24] Cf. *Archil.* 54 συνῆδραμεν, *Semon.* 7. 9 ἀνῆδραμον, 89 ἀμφιδῆδρομεν.

[25] Only *Aesch. Suppl.* 624 ἐπέκρανεν, *Pers.* 395 ἐπέφλεγεν, *Agam.* 536 ἔθρισεν; *Eur. Hcl.* 646 ἐπλησθη, *H.* 150 ἐκλήθης, *Hel.* 1188 ἀπέθρισας, *Or.* 12 ἐπέκλωσεν, 128 ἀπέθρισεν, *IA.* 1351 ἔτλη. Also in the anonymous fragment, my *Gk. Lit. P.* no. 33 v. 19, ἐνῆτραπη. With these I should associate *Soph. El.* 366 κέκλησθαι.

[26] Lobel, p. 3.

[27] *Poet.* 1451 b, tr. Bywater (with *Anthos* for *Antheus*).

[28] Smith³ *ad fin.*

[29] For what follows, see especially Kranz, *Stasimon* (1933), kap. 3; Gow, *J.H.S.* xlviii (1928), pp. 133 ff.

[30] The one fairly certain clue to the context is given in col. i. 13, λέξω τὸ πᾶν, which (as Lobel says) was presumably spoken by the Queen. I suppose that the Chorus was female; it is surely

more probable that the Queen will tell this particular story to women than to men. Lobel says that 'if anything may be inferred from Herodotus, the Chorus may have consisted τῶν οἰκετέων τοὺς μάλιστα ὥρα πιστοὺς ἔόντας ἐαυτῇ', i.e. presumably *males*: but the following words in Herodotus, ἐκόλλε τὸν Γύγεα, suggest that these are the persons whom she sent to fetch Gyges, not necessarily the persons in regular attendance upon her.

[31] As so often in Euripides; cf. e.g. *IT.* 1052 ff., *Hipp.* 710 ff.

[32] Kranz, *l.c.* pp. 16 ff.; cf. Lammers, *Doppel- und Halbchöre in der antiken Tragödie* (Diss. Münster, 1931). I do not myself subscribe to the doctrine.

[33] *Argum. Aesch. Pers.*; Phryn. *fr.* 8 Nauck.

[34] *Ar. Vesp.* 220 Schol.; Phryn. *fr.* 9-10 Nauck.

[35] i. ii, pp. 171 ff.

[36] *Herm.* xxxii (1897), p. 392 (= *Aischylos* pp. 49 f.).

[37] E.g. von Blumenthal, *R.-E.* s.v. Phrynichos: 'die Senatoren waren, wenn sie überhaupt auftraten, κοφὰ πρόσωπα, da der Chor aus Phönizierinnen bestand.' F. Marx, *Rh. Mus.* lxxvii (1928), pp. 337 ff., does not help on this point.

[38] i. 8, quoted in full by Lobel, p. 3.

[39] For the references in the paroemiographers, see Smith², pp. 374 ff.

[40] Theon, *l.c.*

[41] Their history is traced by Smith: ὥτα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν, Smith³, pp. 15 ff.; χρεὴν γὰρ γενέσθαι κακῶς, pp. 23 f.; ἀμα δὲ κιθῶνι κτλ., pp. 20 ff.

[42] Smith³ *passim*.

[43] For what follows see especially Schramm, *Trag. Graec. hellenisticae... aetatis fragmenta* (Münster, 1929); Ziegler, *R.-E.* s.v. Tragoedia, 1965 and n. 27.

[44] We probably ought to add (cf. Ziegler, *R.-E.* s.v. Lykophron, 2320) Σύμμαχοι, Ὀρφανός, Μαραθώνιοι to the list of historical Hellenistic Tragedies; none of them would be any more parallel to our play than Aesch. *Pers.* is.

[45] I am deeply obliged to Mr A. S. F. Gow, who read this lecture in the interval between delivery and printing and improved it in many places.

I add here these afterthoughts: (1) n. [22], add S. *Tr.* 7 codd. A rec. ἐνὶ πλ.; (2) n. [23], I ought to have made it clearer that there is nothing to shew that προε- in προέδραμεν is not monosyllabic; (3) n. [14] on προάγγελος: προα- is a very rare collocation in dignified poetry; but if Thucydides can use προάγγελσις, προαγγέλλω, it seems excessively fastidious to object to προάγγελος in fifth-century drama; (4) I can now refer to Prof. Latte's article in the current number of *Eranos*; but I have not found in it any substantial argument against the early date.

This inaugural lecture, delivered in Cambridge on 18 January 1951 by D.L. Page, Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, was published in 1951 by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, and printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Cambridge (Brooke Crutchley, University Printer).